

1. (Currently Amended) An isolated nucleic acid molecule encoding a Rickettsia felis outer membrane protein having a amino acid sequence as shown SEQ ID NO:2 or having 90% amino acid identity with SEQ ID NO:2.
2. (Original) The isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 1 wherein said nucleic acid is deoxyribonucleic acid.
3. (Original) The isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 2 wherein said deoxyribonucleic acid is cDNA.
4. (Currently Amended). The isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 3 wherein said nucleic acid molecule ~~has a nucleotide sequence as shown in~~ comprises SEQ ID NO:1.
5. (Canceled).
6. (Original) The isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 1 wherein said nucleic acid is ribonucleic acid.
7. (Original) The isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 6 wherein said ribonucleic acid is mRNA.
8. (Currently Amended) A nucleic acid molecule complementary to ~~at least a portion of~~ the mRNA of claim 7.
9. (Currently Amended) A host cell comprising the nucleic acid molecule of claim 8.
10. (Original) An expression vector comprising the nucleic acid molecule of claim 8.
11. (Currently Amended) A host cell comprising the expression vector of claim 10.

12. (Withdrawn)

13. (Original) A cell comprising the nucleic acid molecule of claim 1.

14. (Original) An expression vector comprising the nucleic acid molecule of claim 1.

15. (Original) A cell comprising the expression vector of claim 14.

16. (Original) A method of increasing expression of Rickettsia felis outer membrane protein in a host cell, said method comprising:

introducing the nucleic acid molecule of claim 1 into the cell; and

allowing said cell to express said nucleic acid molecule resulting in the production of Rickettsia felis outer membrane protein in said cell.

17-20 (Withdrawn).

21. (Canceled)

22 -42 (Withdrawn).